DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 040 679 HE 001 604

AUTHOR	Harvey, Philip R.
TITLE	Survey of Graduate Schools Regarding the Use of the Graduate School Foreign Language Tests, 1969-70.
INSTITUTION	Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.
REPORT NO	GSFLT-70-2
PUB DATE	Apr 70
NOTE	8p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.50
DESCRIPTORS	*Degree Requirements, Doctoral Degrees, Graduate Students, *Graduate Study, *Higher Education, *Languages, Masters Degrees, *Tests
IDENTIFIERS	*Graduate Schools Foreign Language Tests (GSFLT)

ABSTRACT

Member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools were asked to respond to a questionnaire about the foreign language requirements at their institutions. Institutions (197) or 69 percent of those contacted responded. One hundred twenty-four schools used the Graduate Schools Foreign Language Tests (GSFLT) for the purpose of meeting the foreign language requirement for an advanced degree. Of these 124, 108 accepted the GSFLT scores when students had taken the tests prior to matriculation in graduate school, and these 69 answered that there was no limit on the number of years prior to matriculation that the tests may be taken. Of those schools that did not use the GSFLT, 11 indicated they planned to do so in the future, 22 did not, and 44 were undecided. Ninety-six of the institutions had a graduate school-wide foreign language requirement for advanced level degrees, and 96 did not. In the last question, institutions with no across the board requirements were asked to indicate which departments had established separate foreign language requirements, and whether these requirements might be met by taking the GSFLT or a locally prepared examination. (AF)

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SURVEY OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS REGARDING THE USE OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TESTS 1969-70

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Philip R. Harvey

Educational Testing Service
Princeton, N. J.

April, 1970

HE 001 604

GSFLT
Report 70-2

SURVEY OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS REGARDING THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TESTS

In response to the request of the Board at its September 1969 meeting, the member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools were asked to respond to a questionnaire about the foreign language requirement at their institutions. The questionnaire was mailed to 287 member schools during the month of November, 1969. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit responses to a number of questions which would enable ETS and the GRE Board to make better evaluations of the new national program procedures for the GSFLT. For example, one of the expected outcomes of the new procedures is that they will permit a larger number of students to take the tests as undergraduates and to have the score available at the time they apply for admission to graduate school. The first four questions of the questionnaire dealt with this issue.

In recent years it has also become apparent that in many graduate schools the responsibility for the language requirement has been transferred to the individual departments. The policies that are established by the departments will have a far-reaching effect on the future of the GSFLT, particularly with respect to the number of candidates expected to take the tests. Two questions of the survey dealt with this matter.

Responses were received from 197 institutions or 69% of the institutions contacted. With respect to the policy dealing the use of GSFLT scores, the following responses were received to questions 1 thru 4.

1. Do one or more departments at your institution use the GSFLT for the purpose of meeting the foreign language requirement for an advanced degree?

Yes 124 No 73

Of the 197 respondents, 63% indicated that one or more departments use the GSFLT. However, a number of the institutions responding "No" have participated in the program during the past two years and in some cases the responding official may not have been aware of the use of the GSFLT by one or more of the departments. During 1968-69, more than 170 graduate schools used these tests which was 60% of the member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools.

2. If the answer to (1.) is Yes, are the GSFLT scores accepted when the students have taken the tests prior to matriculation in graduate school?

Yes 108 No 11 Undecided 5

Of the 124 graduate schools that reported using the GSFLT, 87% responded affirmatively to this question.

3. If the answer to (2.) is Yes, is there a limit on the number of years prior to matriculation that the tests may be taken? (ETS will issue transcripts of the GSFLT score reports for a period of five years after the student is tested.)

Yes 39 No 69

Of the 108 institutions permitting the use of scores earned prior to admission to graduate school, 56% place no limit on the age of the scores. Of the 39 that do limit the number of years that the scores may be used, 18 permit students to report scores for 5 or more years; 4 schools for a period of 4 years; 6 for 3 years; 4 for 2 years; and 1 for 1 year. Six institutions did not respond.

4. If, at this time, your institution does not accept scores for GSFLT taken prior to matriculation, do you plan to do so in the future?

Yes 11 No 22 Undecided 44

Seventy-seven institutions responded to this question of which the vast majority were institutions that do not currently use GSFLT. Only 22 institutions or 11% of the 197 responding institutions indicated that they do not plan to permit the use of the earlier scores. Twenty-two percent of the institutions were undecided.

The following two questions deal with responsibility for the foreign language requirement at the 197 responding institutions.

5. Does your institution currently have a graduate school-wide foreign language requirement for advanced level degrees?

Yes 96 No 96 No Response 5

On this question, the institutions were evenly divided with 49% having a graduate school-wide requirement for at least one language and 49% indicating that they have departmental autonomy with respect to the language requirement.

Of the 124 institutions indicating in Item 1 that they are using the GSFLT, 61 have a graduate school-wide requirement and 61 have placed the foreign language requirement at the departmental level. Two institutions did not respond to this question. For the 73 institutions that indicate they do not use GSFLT, 39 have a graduate school-wide requirement and 32 a departmental requirement. Two institutions did not respond to this question.

6. If your graduate school does not have a requirement across the board, which departments have established separate foreign language requirements? For each department, please indicate whether the requirement may be met by taking the GSFLT or a locally prepared examination.

The presentation of the responses to this item in a meaningful way is difficult since some useful information is lost by combining responses for each department across graduate schools. However, this is the method that has been selected in order to present in concise form a substantial amount of data. In the following table are listed the departments having the responsibility for the foreign language requirement in the 96 institutions that reported departmental requirements in Item 5. For each departmental field, the number of institutions responding in each category are given. As an example, for biology, 15 institutions stated that 2 languages were required, while 20 indicated that 1 language at a higher level could be used to meet the requirement. In many of the institutions either method may be used to fulfill the requirement. Ten institutions require only 1 language and 3 permit students to use other means to meet the requirement. With respect to the method of testing, 15 departments reported using the GSFLT and 23 locally prepared tests.

From these data it is clear that for many fields two languages remain a common requirement. However, the requirement of a single language at a higher level of proficiency has been adopted widely and it is the method reported by the largest number of institutions in many fields.

The GSFLT has been adopted widely by individual departments as the foreign language tests. However, more than half of the departments reported that locally prepared examinations are still being used.

Name of Department	Requirement: Two Languages	Requirement: One Language at a Higher Level of Proficiency	Requirement: One Language	Requirement: Other	Tests: GSFLT	Tests: Locally Prepared Exam
Agriculture	5	1	4		9	6
American Studies	2	2		1	1	2
Anatomy	10	2	1	1	6	3
Anthropology	5	4	2	2	6	10
Astronomy	5	1	3	1	2	4
Biochemistry	10	8	4	1	10	16
Biology	15	20	10	3	15	23
Botany	5	3			3	2
Business	1	1				2
Chemistry	19	23	13	6	25	31
Classics	10	1	2	1	6	7
Communications	7	11	2	4	9	8
Comp. Literature	8	1		1	3	6
Economics	4	6	5	3	7	8
Education	12	10	2	14	19	18
Engineering	12	17	7	2	9	9
English	24	20	6	8	26	27
Entomology	2	2		1		2
Fine Arts	6	2		1	1	3
Foreign Language	8	1	1		2	5
Geography	4	4	4	2	2	7
Geology	8	5	1	3	8	10
German	12	4	1		9	8
Government	6	9	7	7	14	10
History	26	21	4	3	23	28
Home Economics		1				1
Library	3	2		1	2	2
Linguistics	9	2		1	3	4
Mathematics	32	7	7	2	13	31
Microbiology	8	4	3	1	7	5
Medical	1			1		2
Mining			1			
Music	10	6		2	5	11
Pathology	3	1	3	1	3	4
Pharmacy	9	5		2	7	8
Philosophy	17	8	2	3	16	13
Physics	17	12	10	8	14	17
Physiology	4	2	3		6	2
Psychology	8	13		7	14	16
Religion	1	4				5
Social Sciences		1				1
Sociology	2	8		4	9	9
Spanish	8	1	2		4	7
Statistics	1	2		1	1	5
Zoology	7	2	1	1	5	2
Totals	366	260	111	100	324	400

SURVEY OF COUNCIL OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS
REGARDING THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TESTS

1. Do one or more departments at your institution use the GSFLT for the purpose of meeting the foreign language requirement for an advanced degree?

   Yes ____ No ____

2. If the answer to (1.) is Yes, are the GSFLT scores accepted when the students have taken the tests prior to matriculation in graduate school?

   Yes ____ No ____

3. If the answer to (2.) is Yes, is there a limit on the number of years prior to matriculation that the tests may be taken? (ETS will issue transcripts of the GSFLT score reports for a period of five years after the student is tested.)

   Yes ____ No ____ If Yes, how many years _____.

4. If, at this time, your institution does not accept scores for GSFLT taken prior to matriculation, do you plan to do so in the future?

   Yes ____ No ____ Undecided ____

5. Does your institution currently have a graduate school-wide foreign language requirement for advanced level degrees?

   Yes ____ No ____

6. If your graduate school does not have a requirement across the board, which departments have established separate foreign language requirements? For each department, please indicate whether the requirement may be met by taking the GSFLT or a locally prepared examination.

	Requirement				
Name of Department	Two Languages	One Language at a Higher Level of Proficiency	Other	GSFLT	Locally Prepared Exam

(over for additional entries)

	Requirement				
Name of Department	Two Languages	One Language at a Higher Level of Proficiency	Other	GSFLT	Locally Prepared Exam

7. Are other skill subjects accepted in lieu of foreign languages for the purpose of meeting the graduate-level degree requirement?

Yes ____ No ____ If Yes, which subjects _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. In the space below, please write any comments you wish to make on the extent to which departmental autonomy regarding language requirements has already affected the situation at your institution and what trend you see for the future.

Return to: Mrs. Helen Thomas P-143
Graduate School Foreign Language Tests
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey 08540